

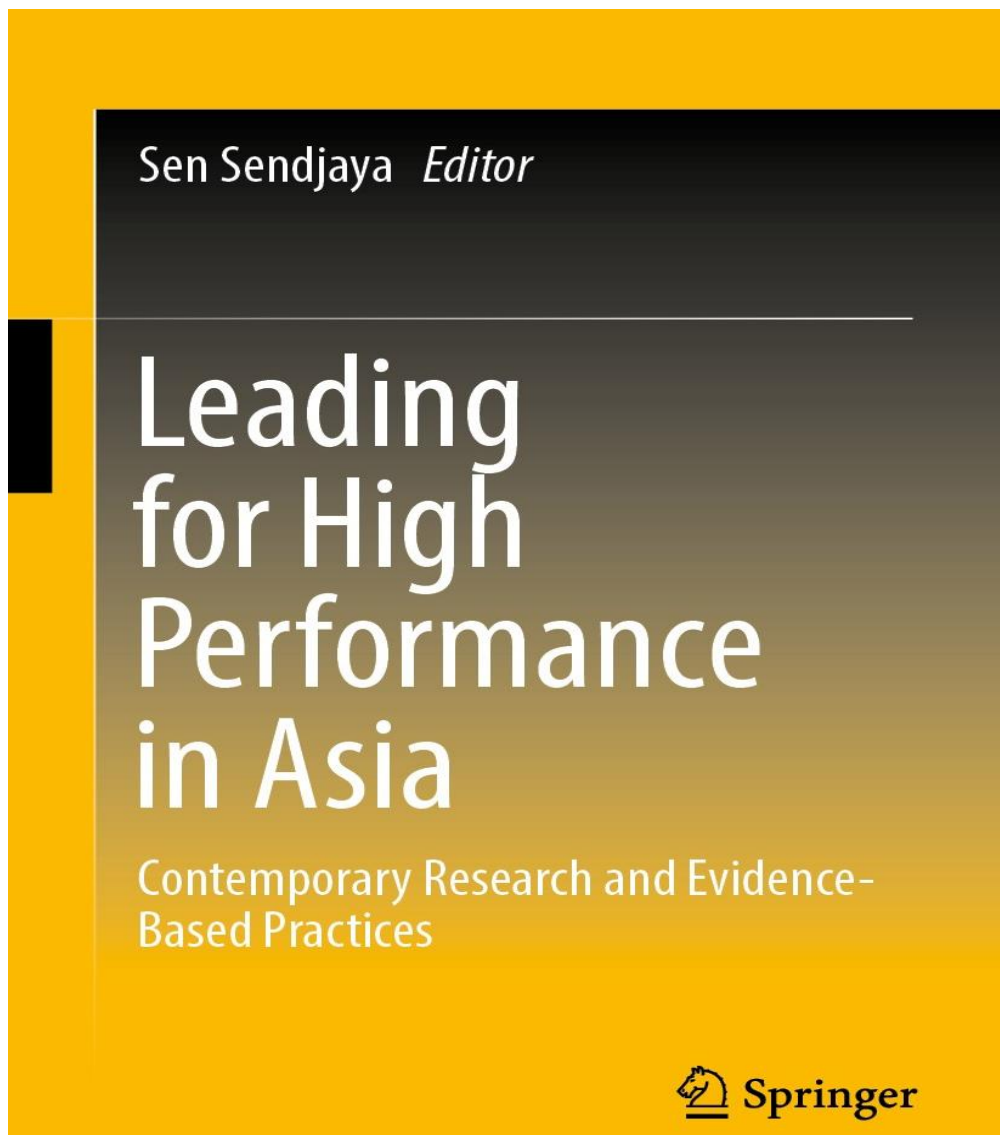
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## ‘Pergumulan’ as the Starter and Sustainer of Servant Leadership: A Case of Academic Leadership in an Indonesian Private University


[Ricky](#) 

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### Abstract

In the disruptive era, every organization is expected to cope with change. This includes the

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# Leading for High Performance in Asia

Sen Sendjaya  
Editor

# Leading for High Performance in Asia

Contemporary Research and Evidence-Based  
Practices

*Editor*  
Sen Sendjaya  
Swinburne Business School  
Swinburne University of Technology  
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# Preface

As nearly 60% of the world's population reside in Asia, the region has evolved into the hub of global diversity and innovation. It is no doubt the fastest growing region in the world. The latest data to date show that Asia is the top foreign direct investment (FDI) destination in the world capturing a third of the \$1.76 trillion in global FDI share. The implications for leaders of organisations operating in Asia are enormous, particularly in the light of the following strategic challenges and opportunities.

First, the digital disruption of business models and practices is continuing to rewrite rules and rearrange boundaries of business. While it has helped create strong and steady economic growth in the region, it forces businesses to operate in a novel and ambiguous context. As such, organisational leaders are expected to engage in strategic sensemaking in order to provide meaning and direction, lest the organisational inertia sets in. Leaders are charged with directing creative people and efforts which require influential processes distinct from traditional leadership operating in normal organisational functioning.

The second challenge is leadership talent shortage at the global scale but primarily in Asia. The ever-growing multi-billion dollars leadership development programmes (an estimated \$16 billion in the USA alone) continue to fail to create steady leadership pipelines which produce real and significant impacts. Recent global leadership surveys done by consulting firms such as PwC, Deloitte, and Korn Ferry invariably suggest that there is severe lack of confidence in the ability of our leaders to deliver on strategic priorities. And given the accelerating rate of change, Asian companies need to accelerate the development of leadership talents through the contextually fitting portfolio of developmental experiences.

Finally, the scholarly work on contextualised theories and constructs of leadership that accurately reflects the rich heritage, philosophy, traditions, and cultures of Asia is quite scarce. Rigorous efforts to study leadership approaches indigenous to this region would bolster leadership effectiveness in Asian organisations and in turn accelerate further the contributions of Asia to the global economy.

In the light of the above challenges and opportunities, this edited monograph presents strategic insights on leading and managing for high performance in Asia. Each chapter presents findings from cutting-edge theoretical or empirical investigations from various countries in Asia, including China, Indonesia, Singapore, and Australia. These include strategies to foster citizenship and prosocial behaviours in high-performing firms, the roles of culture-specific values such as paternalism and collectivism, the construction of leader identity, the effects of leadership on team satisfaction, the development of female leaders, and key lessons in strategic leadership development. The studies were conducted by experts on various fields employing a range of methodologies from in-depth interviews, field survey, and computer simulation.

This monograph will help readers to get an overview of current leadership challenges in Asia, and more importantly the relevant insights necessary to develop a set of strategic and actionable decisions to tackle those challenges. Every chapter will have a section around managerial implications where evidence-based practical and contextual recommendations can be readily applied. As such, it is a valuable tool for leadership scholars and practitioners with an interest in Asia. Scholars and students who want to have access to the latest research to inform their current or future research agenda would also benefit from the chapters.

Melbourne, Australia

Sen Sendjaya

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Keywords (separated by '-')	Servant leadership - 'Pergumulan' - Spiritual - Intrapersonal - Interpersonal	

# Chapter 9

## ‘Pergumulan’ as the Starter and Sustainer of Servant Leadership: A Case of Academic Leadership in an Indonesian Private University



Ricky

**Abstract** In the disruptive era, every organization is expected to cope with change. This includes the ones in the sector of higher education. Servant leadership is considered as the leadership approach that enables Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to deal with the inevitable changes. This research explores an academic leadership in a private university in Indonesia, which endorses servant leadership as its leadership approach. The case study involves the interview of twenty-six academic leaders who have asked to answer two fundamental questions: (1) How do they perceive the invitation to lead as an academic leader and (2) What did they do as they consider whether to take the offer to lead as an academic leader? The gathered data was processed using the Qualitative Data Analysis consisting data condensation, data display and drawing and verifying conclusion. Twenty-five academic leaders said no when they first offer and this initial refusal drives the researcher to find a term called ‘pergumulan’ as the common theme across the interviewees. ‘Pergumulan’ or a spiritual struggle happened during the pre-leadership journey and during the leadership journey of these academic leaders. The former suggests that ‘pergumulan’ is spiritual, intrapersonal and interpersonal. The latter indicates that pergumulan happens when the servant leaders search their motivation and figure out the way to improve themselves while serving their followers. Lastly, during their leadership, the servant leaders are also having the ‘pergumulan’ as they have to confront or rebuke their followers.

**Keywords** Servant leadership · ‘Pergumulan’ · Spiritual · Intrapersonal · Interpersonal

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## 9.1 Changes and Servant Leadership

Higher Educational degree is the currency in the knowledge economy. In this industrial 4.0, Higher Educational relevance and efficiency is the one. Irrelevance higher education has been left by its constituent gradually. There are top fifteen companies according to Purtill (2018) that have declared that college degree is no longer relevant for young professionals to be their employee. These multinational companies look more for the skill and competency that have been decoupled from the higher educational degree (Purtill, 2018). Although most of the organizations and countries around the world still use college degree as a requirement they also notice that a college degree is no longer a guarantee that its holder is as capable as expected. Organizations these days will demand further explanations on the origin of the degree and what sort of trainings or programs happened when its holder was pursuing it. The irony is that college degree has lost its value from one that can certify the competency of its holder into the one that only allow its holder to be accepted by an organization to be trained further (Tierney, 2014).

The relevance of HE is very important given that the industrial changes including the 4.0 have created a new form of what McAfee (2013) called as technological unemployment. The previous industrial revolution, the advancement of industrial technology has created a massively technological unemployment as labors in the factories were laid off. In the current industrial revolution 4.0, technological unemployment happens in the form of the loss of jobs of those who work in the retail and service sector (Schwab, 2016). These changes should be dealt with by organizational leaders using a leadership approach that is known to be the one that is transformative and adaptive like servant leadership.

Servant leadership is well known as a leadership that enables people to cope with changes as servant leaders lead with the focus of serving their followers. Serving their followers means that servant leaders should understand and meet the need of their followers (Greenleaf, 1977; Wheeler, 2012). The served followers for (Van Dierendonck, 2011) are expected to be the ones who will grow holistically and be able not only to contribute to their organization but also to their society. Servant leaders expect that changes that happen to their organization can be treated as opportunities and facilitators for growing their followers. Servant leaders are expected to enable their followers to handle the orders or demands from 'above' related to the changes (Wheeler, 2012; Barret & Barret, 2007).

The disruptive technology is another term after globalization and financial austerity that should be dealt by various sectors including the higher education (HE) sector (Kubler & Sayers, 2010). These three challenges have caused colleges and universities to do more with less without sacrificing their academic sanctity. The sector of higher education needs a leadership approach that enables transformation from within and it has been suggested that *servant leadership* is the best approach for the HE sector. Farnsworth (2007) suggests that servant leadership is a leadership for the HE sector given that the sector needs professionals who know how to provide creative yet dignified solutions. These solutions are the ones that can meet the demands

of the students and the industries without compromising the absolute necessity of academic purposes like the holistic development of the students, critical thinking, and rigid research. Servant leadership is known as a leadership that transforms the followers to be a whole-rounded person who is enabled to provide meaningfully creative solutions (Wheeler, 2012).

It was Robert K. Greenleaf who developed a paradoxical approach to leadership called servant leadership (Northouse, 2010). Greenleaf (1977) posits that anyone working in an organisation has a 'dual being', that is, s/he is both servant and leader. For Greenleaf, this dual being is not only possible but also imperative for an effective leadership. Servant leadership is a leadership approach that requires the leader to serve the followers by meeting the needs of the followers (Spears, 1998). In contrast to authoritarian leadership approaches, in which what the leader does is determined by their desire to be leader first, servant leadership theory holds that the true leader is motivated by their desire to be a servant first. This leadership approach, based on the philosophy of service, is needed to promote creativity among the people within the sector in dealing with the sector's challenges (Farnsworth, 2007; Wheeler, 2012).

The idealistic expectations of servant leadership do not come without some strings attached. Wheeler (2012) argues that researching servant leadership is difficult since true servant leaders will not declare themselves. Research as the best way to know more about servant leadership is not an easy endeavor. The fundamental question that still begs for an answer is about the antecedent of servant leadership. What can make an individual willing to be the servant of his or her followers? Research show that sense of calling-to-serve (Wheeler, 2012), need to serve (Van Dierendonck, 2011) and compassionate love (Van Dierendonck and Patterson, 2010) have been suggested as the reason for serving for servant leaders. Unfortunately, these studies do not explain the thought process of the servant leaders as they were willing to serve as part of their being.

Servant leadership scholars tend to refer spiritual values and corporate values as the ideals within the servant leaders that drive them to put their interests behind the ones of their followers. Christian servant leader scholars suggest that spiritual transformation is considered as the corner stone of the sense of calling-to-serve of servant leaders (Reinke, 2004; Page & Wong, 2000). These scholars argue that for a servant leader to serve he or she would need to have a transcendental being who calls and sustain them (Page & Wong, 2000). The transcendental being is the one who caused a servant leader to have what Sendjaya (2015) called as 'transcendental spirituality' which has a strong association with these servant leaders' voluntary willingness to serve. Scholars also carefully mention that servant leadership that comes from the nature of a leader (as a servant) is not a simple process. It takes the continuous renewal of commitment (to serve) of the servant leaders to be able to humble themselves to serve their followers (Spears, 1998; Russell & Stone, 2002; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007).

This research has two fundamental aims: to explore the concept of the antecedent of servant leadership and to understand the internal thought process of servant leaders. These aims will be achieved by answering these research questions: (1) How do they perceived the invitation to lead as an academic leader? (2) What did they do when

they consider the invitation to take the academic leadership position? Theoretically, these questions will guide the researcher to explore the considerations of servant leaders when they were asked to lead (serve) and practically, the understanding the internal thought process of the leaders will enable the organization to strengthen its leadership development program.

## 9.2 The Servant Leadership Case

This research is about exploring the internal thoughts of academic leaders of a private university who have been trained to lead their academic unit using the principles of servant leadership. In reviewing a decade of research related to higher educational leadership, Lumby (2012) suggests that research in this field is complex, contingent, and contested. The difficulty in researching this field is due to both methodological and ethical issues. Methodologically, it is difficult to disentangle leadership from other social processes (Middlehurst, 1993) and ethically, it is complex to detach researchers from their university affiliation (Bryman & Lilley, 2009). Research on higher educational leadership requires more robust methodology and more authentic and objective researchers. The researcher has the opportunity to use a case study as one of such research methodologies, to advance knowledge in the area of higher educational leadership.

The context of this case study is a private university situated in one of the major cities in Indonesia. The private campus, which has been providing HE for more than five decades, has a name that reveals the campus' identity as a faith-based (Christian) campus. The existence of the Christian university cannot be separated from the earlier establishment of a Christian Education Board which governs Christian schools. This organisation was founded by Chinese Christian Indonesians who believe that Christians in Indonesia need to be educated in Christian schools (PPPK, 2014).

Most of the members of the board eventually established the case campus to provide higher education for students graduating from the Christian schools. The Christian campus, which started its higher educational service with one undergraduate programme under one faculty, today serves more than seven thousand active students distributed in more than twenty undergraduate academic programmes and two master programmes (BAAK, 2014). The following table describes the establishment timing of these academic programmes.

Table 9.1 shows a fluctuation in the number of programmes being opened in the first five decades of the case campus. It took two decades for the case campus to establish its fourth academic programme whereas nine new academic programmes were offered in its fourth decade. The case campus needed more than three decades to open its first post graduate programme (a Master's degree programme). This is unlike the founding fathers of the case campus when they established the university after just a decade of providing secondary education for the community.

There are currently 300 active lecturers distributed in six different schools and one General Education department. The records show that there are still 26 lecturers

**Table 9.1** The timing of the establishment of academic programmes (UKP, 2012)

Period	Number of established academic programmes
The first decade	3 Undergraduate programmes
The second decade	0 Undergraduate programmes
The third decade	3 Undergraduate programmes
The fourth decade	9 Undergraduate programmes and 1 post graduate programme
The fifth decade	4 Undergraduate programmes and 1 post graduate programme

**Table 9.2** Lecturers' academic rank (BAUK, 2014)

No	Academic rank	Lecturer	
		Number	Percentage
1	None <sup>a</sup>	75	25
2	Instructor	101	34
3	Assistant professor	65	21.67
4	Associate professor	52	17
5	Professor	7	2.33

<sup>a</sup>In Indonesia, an academic rank is awarded by the Directorate General for Higher Education. This HE Educational body is under the Minister of Research-Technology and Higher Education. Sometimes, those appointed to teach by the university have not yet attained a formal academic rank

(8.7%) who have only a Bachelor qualification. There are 229 lecturers with a Master's degree (76.3%) and 45 with a Doctoral degree (15%) (BAUK, 2014). There are currently 159 lecturers who used to be students of the case campus or in other words, more than 50% of the full-time lecturers are alumni of the case campus (BAUK, 2014).

As well as their qualifications, the lecturers' quality can be indicated from their academic rank. Table 9.2 describes the case campus' lecturers' academic rank. Most of the lecturers are at instructor level, only seven already have their Professor status and seventy-five are still without their academic rank.

Besides the academic rank, the latest indicator introduced by the government to measure a lecturer's quality is his/her professional certification. To obtain a professional certification, a lecturer should have a Master's degree and an Instructor academic rank. Based on this regulation, the case campus has yet to certify their seventy-five full-time lecturers. Further investigation shows that there are more than 50% lecturers who are late in getting their academic rank (BAUK, 2014). These lecturers' academic ranks do not reflect their academic working years; there are times when they either did not achieve their academic rank or did not have the academic results necessary for a higher academic rank. In summary, the case campus' lecturers

**Table 9.3** The distribution of students and lecturers in six faculties (BAAK, 2014)

No	Faculty	Active students		Full-Time lecturers	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1	Social science/SS—A	231	3.1	32	11
2	SS—B	3,082	41.42	71	24
3	SS—C	1,299	17.46	39	13
4	SS—D	460	6.18	19	7
5	Natural science/NS—A	1,139	15.31	69	24
6	NS—B	1,229	16.52	62	21

need to improve their academic qualifications and academic ranks and thereby obtain their professional certification.

The Christian campus currently has six schools/faculties with arguably unequal distribution of student numbers, let alone the distribution of lecturers. Table 9.3 shows that one of the Faculties educates 41.42% of the total students and the distribution of the active students does not match the distribution of the full-time lecturers.

Despite the faith-based nature of the case campus, the private University is open for any students from any background to study. However, given the unique history, most of the students of the case campus are either Indonesians of Chinese (CCIS, 2014) descent and/or Christians (UKP, 2012). Given the private status, the campus relies for almost all its funding on the students who are mainly being funded by their parents, who unfortunately perceive the case campus as an expensive campus in spite of its good facilities (Fitriya, 2012).

This situation has caused parents to some extent to regard their child's higher educational expenses as an investment for the future. Due to President Soeharto's programme of assimilation and social discrimination in the period 1967–1998, Chinese Indonesians tend to prefer to remain invisible, to keep silent and go their own way (Koning, 2007). One of their ways is to be independent economically, where they believe that their financial strength will enable them to stand against the discrimination. Their focus on the economy has made Chinese Indonesians relatively strong in their financial capacity which leads politicians to state that the minor ethnic group of just 5% is able to control 75% of the nations' economy (Suryadinata, 1999).

This brief description explains the family background of the students studying in the case campus. Students of the case campus tend to aim for the practical aspect of HE rather than critical thinking and knowledge generation. The background of the students might influence their perspective and aspiration when they enter the case campus. These students for Walujono (2014) might have the pragmatic thinking that ideas and concepts are not implementable as they seek more current secure environment, network, and degree which they perceive valuable for their future.



**Table 9.4** Stages of Qualitative Data Analysis

No	Stage	Explanation	Outcome
1	Data collection	The process of collecting the data using methods that will enable the researcher to understand the depth of a phenomena	Interview records
2	Data condensation	The process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the data appear to in the full body of the written data	Field-notes, interview transcripts
3	Data display	The process of making an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing	Analytical grid that is relevant to the research questions and theory
4	Drawing and verifying conclusion	The process of making an interpretation of the data by noting patterns, explanations, causal flows, and propositions	Themes that are relevant for answering the research questions

Source Miles et al. (2014)

### 9.3 Methodology

This research uses case study methodology because the researcher would like to explore the truth from the agents or the leaders themselves when they are in the act of doing their leadership. Case study has the power to research a phenomenon without having to detach the research participants from their context (Thomas, 2011). This is important since leadership is a phenomenon that is difficult to be separated from the leader (Ribbins & Gunter, 2002).

Twenty-six academic leaders were interviewed using a semi-structured interview. These leaders consist of two presidential leaders, six decanal leaders and eighteen departmental leaders. They were asked to explain the starting point of their appointment as an academic leader and to describe how did they eventually decided and got the leadership position. The data gathering and analysis follow the Qualitative Data Analysis procedures (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The QDA involves four interrelated processes, namely: data collection, data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusion. The following Table 9.4 explains every step and its outcomes.

The stages in a QDA are not purely sequential. The process of data analysis happens when the researcher collects the data and the next stages are stages that are interrelated and done in an iterative way (Bryman, 2012; Yin 2014). Every

**Table 9.5** The pre-leadership journey of academic leaders of the case campus

No	Stage	Explanation	Outcome
1	Invitational	The upper level leader invites minimum two candidates to consider the leadership position	Minimum two leaders who are willing to be the candidates
2	Candidacy	The willing candidates are going through the necessary candidacy process which involves background check, health check and candidacy presentation.	The recommendation from the members of the senate for every candidate.
3	Election	The board and the upper level leader are choosing one of the recommended candidates	One elected academic leader for every position

Source YPTK (2004)

interviewee is given a pseudonym to ensure that his or her name is untraceable. This is part of the commitment of the researcher to the ethical standard of the research.

## 9.4 ‘Pergumulan’

When asked about their pre-leadership journey, the academic leaders of the case campus told the researcher that they were reluctant or not willing to accept the invitation extended by the Board (for the presidential leaders) or the Presidential leader (for the decanal leaders) or the Decanal leaders (for the departmental leaders). The case campus is running a system of democratic-participatory approach (YPTK, 2004). This approach involves three stages: the invitation stage, the candidacy stage and the election stage. The following Table 9.5 explains each stage of the pre-leadership journey of an academic leader of the case campus.

The fact that twenty-five academic leaders said no when they were first during the invitational process tells that there must be process these academic leaders went through before eventually willing to participate in the nomination process. The academic leaders who were asked to lead using a servant leadership approached mentioned that they underwent a process that is in bahasa called as ‘pergumulan’.

## 9.5 Pergumulan as the Starter of Servant Leadership

Pergumulan is an internal process that is crucial for servant leaders. In this internal process, servant leaders compare-and-contrast dilemmas related to their willingness to serve. Servant leaders are leaders who should influence their followers through their genuine service. In providing service for their followers, servant leaders have to decide on the prioritizing issues. Theoretically, servant leaders are in the constant

240 battle between prioritizing themselves and those under their leadership (Perry, 1983).  
241 This is a very delicate matter, which can be known only by the servant leaders  
242 themselves. This is an intrapersonal relationship matter, which for MacArthur (2004)  
243 concerns the attitude of their heart.

244 In their pre-leadership stage, academic servant leaders did their pergumulan as  
245 they consider different factors, which affect their willingness to be nominated in their  
246 current leadership position. The case campus follows a semi-democratic system in  
247 which a candidate will be suggested by his or her influential peers as these peers  
248 answered the questions asked by the president or the higher-level leader of certain  
249 position. For example, in order to elect a dean, the Rector or the President of the  
250 University will ask the current dean as well as the influential lecturers of the suitable  
251 candidates. The Rector then will approach the candidates suggested by their peers  
252 and offer these candidates a leadership position. The Rector normally will ask these  
253 candidates to consider the offer. The Rector will ask these candidates to go through  
254 the process of 'pergumulan'. This research is about trying to understand the concept  
255 of 'pergumulan'.

256 The academic servant leaders of the case campus stated that pergumulan is a  
257 spiritual process where they consider the offer as an offer from the Divine Being  
258 who they believe as the One who is in control for their lives both on this earth and  
259 beyond. These academic leaders will try to answer one 'simple' question: 'Is being  
260 a leader the will of the Divine Being?' Ella, one of the academic leaders stated her  
261 story when she tried to answer the question:

262 At first, it was really a 'No'. I just finished my PhD program. I wanted to 'just' become an  
263 ordinary lecturer: teaching, researching, and publishing. However, my colleagues asked me  
264 to think it over given the condition of our academic program. These long-time colleagues  
265 of mine during a lunch time map the potential leaders and they said that they see nobody  
266 else suitable for the job. I perceived that lunch as one of the ways God spoke to me. I said  
267 to them that I will 'bergumul' about it. I was in doubt at that time. Not so much because of  
268 the administrative matter but it is more because I will have to deal with colleagues or have  
269 a friction with them. I really do not like this part of the leadership role. When I was still  
270 thinking about it, the campus was inaugurating the higher-level officers. During that time,  
271 I was still praying and thinking about it and one day, as I went to an inauguration day and  
272 listened to the sermon. It was about 'Who is willing to be assigned by God?' I feel that it  
273 was God who talked directly to me... (G10, Ella).

274 Another academic servant leader who leads a Social science school described his  
275 thoughts during his nomination period:

276 I know that it will be very administrative. I will have to deal with report making, signing  
277 letters, deciding through bureaucracy. If you came to my house you would immediately agree  
278 that I am not an administrator. I happen to be a person who is not tidy. My wife can tell you  
279 that and she would just use my messy working table for it. But, then, I believe that serving  
280 as a suffering academic leader is my way of returning God's kindness. I came from a very  
281 poor family [Crying] and only by the kindness of God that I my family could move one  
282 after my father left us. God was the one who restored my family and allowed me to pursue  
283 my education until the level of Doctorate. His kindness is my fundamental reason for being  
284 willing to be an academic leader. (G3, Robert)

The statements of the academic servant leaders above are the evidence that ‘pergumulan’ is a spiritual matter. This means these academic leaders were doing spiritual activities so that they can be convinced in accepting the invitation of the President or Dean to be an academic leader. This confirms the spiritual nature of servant leadership suggested by Spears (1998) and Sendjaya (2015). The next section will explain the considerations of the academic leaders.

The academic servant leaders mentioned that when they were asked to decide on their nomination, they were weighing their capability and the needs of their organization. One of the considerations of their ‘pergumulan’ is related to the perception of themselves on their own capability. Alex, one of the heads of department shared his thoughts:

I don’t think I have the skill to be an academic leader. I don’t like to speak in public. Doing so is such a huge pressure for me. However, I was also being convinced by many that I was the most appropriate candidate as I was the one who could be accepted by the seniors and the juniors. I finally said yes because I believe that I will be able to fulfill what is needed of me. The main role of an academic department head is to be the one who could manage the academic processes. This means s/he should be able to assist his or her colleagues to advance their academic career. (G18, Alex)

Besides ‘bergumul’ or thinking deeply of whether one can contribute to his or her academic unit. The servant leaders of the case campus also mentioned that their ‘pergumulan’ is related to the people who will work above and with them. Dan, one of the presidential leaders mentioned:

I was approached multiple times and kept saying no to these approaches. However, the vision and mission of the President cause me to rethink the offer. The shared vision was so compelling. I guess it was because of the trustworthiness of the leader. I perceived that sharing of vision as a spiritual event of my life. I feel that God was moving me to support this leader. I can feel that the sharing of vision of the President moves me to the one who support me. My job is to make him successful in fulfilling the vision that He has received from God. (G2, Dan).

The sharing from the presidential leader is one of the evidence that servant leaders consider the potential colleagues within their leadership structure. This is also confirmed by Heather, one of departmental leaders as she said in her following statement:

When I was approached to be an academic leader, I was considering it by recalling stories of some of my colleagues who had to work under the ‘wrong’ leader. The unethical leader would ‘shift’ his jobs to my colleagues. These lazy leaders did not do the job and transferred it to their vice or deputy instead. I have to make sure about who will be my direct leader and indirect leaders. When I feel that my leader-to-be is somebody who I can trust then I feel that It is a confirmation from above that I can take the leadership position (G9, Heather).

The evidence above shows that ‘pergumulan’ tends to be an intrapersonal process of the academic leaders as they process internally things of their past and things currently presented before them. However, these academic leaders also suggested that these academic leaders also tried to get the second opinion on these offers. Some of them and mostly female leaders talked to their families and some were consulting

to their reliable friends. Emma, one of the departmental head of an engineering program shared:

My greatest consideration is my family. My husband was very supportive as he believes that competencies will be added to the called ones. However, I was concerned with my children's education. Previously, when I was still a vice head, I was already called by the headmaster of the school of my children. My son's academic results were deteriorating. I was thinking that I can't imagine what will happen to my son's academic results if I decided to be an academic leader. Eventually, I said yes, because my spouse promised me to fully support my decision (G25, Emma).

The evidence above suggest that 'pergumulan' is a spiritual process which for Winston (2002) involves the servant leader's spiritual dialogue with a Divine or Transcendental being who these leaders have believed to have called them to be a servant leader. Furthermore, 'pergumulan' is also evident to be a process of self-dialogue as servant leaders weigh in whether they are capable to carry the responsibility of a leadership position. This self-dialogue is an important process of servant leaders who according to scholars need to listen to their own inner voice (Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Lastly, this research through its data gathering also confirmed that 'pergumulan' is an intrapersonal process, which involves rational dialogues servant leaders do with their family and friends. This confirms what Page and Wong's (2000) called as relational process of servant leaders. These three characteristics of 'pergumulan' have been indicated as the ones that eventually confirmed the lecturers of the case campus to be academic leaders who have to serve their colleagues and students.

## 9.6 Pergumulan as the Sustainer of Servant Leadership

Every servant leader has his or her personal plan and this does not necessarily mean that the servant leader is selfish in doing so. In this research, servant leaders of the case campus should improve themselves and this professional improvement is part of their identity as a scholar. An academic leader who leads a social science program shares her story:

It is really tough to be an academic leader. You must manage your program, dealing with its main issue, which in my case is the low student intake. On top of these managerial and marketing issues, an academic leader still has to manage his or academic qualification. A colleague of mine who works in Singapore told me that academics in Singapore should choose between academic track or managerial track. In Indonesia, every lecturer including an academic leader has to improve his or her qualification. They have to be good at both academic and administrative roles of them. This is really a tough struggle for an academician. I have to think about every aspect of my department and also the triad roles of my profession (G9, Heather).

These personal aspirations to be excellence scholars are not selfish at all since the servant leaders' excellence is needed by the organizations where they serve. One of the presidential leaders confirms this from his following statement:

Every academic leader also has to pursue his or her academic qualification. This is not just for his or her own financial rewards but also for his and her organizational performance. Every lecturer should research and publish his expertise. It is not easy, but it is like a double benefit if you may call it. When they are advancing their career, the reputation of their campus will be lifted as well. This is really a 'pergumulan' for every academic leader. They should be wise in managing their time and able to utilize their resources to develop their followers as well as their own academic credentials (G2, Dan).

In practice, some interviewees also mentioned that pursuing excellence should also be genuinely done. A lecturer who pursues for a progression on his or her professional qualification should not only achieve what is required by the standard. This research finds that an advancement of professional qualification does not always reflect the progress a lecturer should achieve in his or her basic function of teaching. Demi, one of the departmental leaders stated in her following statement:

As an academic leader, I have to ensure that the research of the lecturers is relevant to their students learning. I got the sense that quite many lecturers do research solely for their own 'on-paper advancement' which has nothing to do with their other function like teaching. In other words, research that should be the root of teaching was not there. I should evaluate my colleague's scholarly activities and to justify my evaluation, I also must have academic activities that are of quality. Besides improving my own qualification, I also must ensure that when I criticize the research of my colleagues, I did it with my integrity and not out of like and dislike (G26, Demi).

'Pergumulan' in servant leadership in the context of higher education involves a clear motivation of the academic servant leaders on their professional advancement. They should excel in their scholarly requirements, but they do so to achieve a higher academic rank so that these leaders could better their service. Most of the academic servant leaders mentioned that it is almost impossible to increase their professional qualification while leading or administering their academic unit. One of the issues is about seniority. Dayton who leads an engineering program shared his struggle in the following statement:

I have heard complaints from the students on the performance of my senior lecturers. There was a time when I should be in the middle between a student and a lecturer who just had a dispute. The root of the problem is on the lecturer's lack of transparency in relation to the mark of the student. The student was not happy with his mark and has failed to meet the lecturer to question it. Apparently, the lecturer did not keep the student's paper work very well and fail to provide a proper feedback. I must try my best to resolve the case without offending the senior lecturer. There are many cases related to the attitude of the seniors that I can't handle. This is one of my 'pergumulan' and honestly I can only pray for these seniors hoping that God will tell them that they need to change (G24, Dayton).

The previous evidence enables the researcher to confirm that pergumulan also happens when the academic leaders were enacting their leadership. They should struggle or 'bergumul' in achieving their higher qualification and this is not just for strengthening their legitimation as a leader, but it is also for improving their quality of service. This is another 'pergumulan' of servant leaders that concerns with their motivation of their personal advancement.

Despite the innate nature of the process, 'pergumulan' also involves a rational dialogue between the servant leader and his or her inner circles. These empirical

dialogues are used to validate and to stimulate the practise of self-listening and internal reflection. In other words, 'pergumulan' involves a reiterative process of internal reflection which includes transcendental listening, and empirical and rational conversation with the people. This research confirms that a servant leader cultivates his or her 'natural willingness' to serve (Greenleaf 1977, p. 7) and reminds him or herself on the values (Wheeler, 2012). This research argues that servant leadership actions might begin with a 'pergumulan' or spiritual struggle within the servant leader him or herself. This sense of spiritual struggle starts from the moment the servant leader contemplated his or her decision to take the leadership position and continues as the servant leader engages in meeting and serving his or her followers.

Lastly, 'pergumulan' also happens when servant leaders should deal with their followers. Servant leaders should consider deeply when they should reprimand or confront their followers. They should ensure that when they confront or rebuke their followers is really for the goodness of the followers. After all, the main tenet of servant leadership is that every servant leader should meet the needs and not the wants of his or her follower (Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008).

## 9.7 Conclusion and Recommendation

This research claims that servant leaders have to go through a process that in Indonesian is called 'pergumulan'. Servant leaders go through this process as they have a spiritual dialogue based on their conviction. Scholars of servant leadership suggest that servant leaders may have different convictions on their fundamental reasons for being a servant. Some servant leaders might use humanity or values as their fundamental reasons and some like in the academic leaders of the case campus confess that a Transcendental Being, which these leaders know as Lord Jesus is their fundamental reason for them to be a servant.

This research also confirms that 'pergumulan' to be sure that they were called by the Divine being involves both intrapersonal and interpersonal process. The former means that the servant leaders weigh their own capability and the latter means that these leaders have rational dialogues with their closed ones. The spiritual, intrapersonal, and interpersonal aspects of the pergumulan encourage them to say yes as they were offered by their superior to be an academic leader. Pergumulan is not only happened in the life of servant leaders prior to their leadership journey.

This research confirms that 'pergumulan' happens as these leaders enact their servant leadership. The 'pergumulan' is related to the way and the motive of their effort in advancing their qualification. Servant leaders sacrifice in the sense that they serve their followers without neglecting their own qualifications. Furthermore, servant leaders advance their qualification with the motive of service; so that they can serve better. Lastly, 'pergumulan' is also needed by the servant leaders as they must rebuke or confront their followers. They should do so with a pure motive that they are meeting the needs of their followers.



Besides clarifying the internal thought-process of servant leaders, this result is useful for institutions, especially the ones in the sector of higher education. Colleagues and universities need to develop leadership development programs based on their understanding of the 'pergumulan' of their potential future leaders. Understanding the anxieties and aspiration of these future leaders will enable the HEIs to create leadership training programs that understand and meet their needs. This kind of leadership training is inherently practicing the tenet of servant leadership.

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